

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 243846

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, MX

SUBJECT: MEXICAN FLAG F/VS FISHING IN ICNAF AREA

REF: MEXICO 8947

1. FISHING SITUATION IN NW ATLANTIC GENERALLY CHARACTERIZED BY EXCESS FISHING EFFORT AND DEPLETED RESOURCES. THIS PARTICULARLY TRUE IN AREA OFF U.S. COAST, BUT IN MANY AREAS AND FOR MANY STOCKS ALSO TRUE FOR NORTHERN ICNAF REGIONS OFF CANADA AND GREENLAND. TO COPE WITH THIS PROBLEM, IN RECENT YEARS ICNAF HAS ADOPTED HOST OF REGULATIONS TO SUPPLEMENT BASIC MINIMUM MESH SIZE REGULATIONS IN EFFECT FROM EARLY 50S. THESE INCLUDE CLOSED AREAS, CLOSED SEASONS, AND QUOTAS - ALMOST ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NATIONALLY ALLOCATED. ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN FORCE FOR 1974 COVERING ALL FISH OFF U.S. COAST AND VIRTUALLY ALL OFF CANADA. IN MANY INSTANCES THESE INVOLVE

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PAGE 02 STATE 243846

SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS IN CATCH. ON GEORGES BANK, COD AND

HADDOCK INTERMINGLE. HADDOCK IS SO BADLY DEPLETED THAT 1974 ICNAF HADDOCK QUOTA WILL BE ZERO. THIS REQUIRES PARTICULAR CONCERN WHEN FISHING FOR COD TO ENSURE THAT INCIDENTAL HADDOCK BYCATCH DOES NOT FURTHER DEplete STOCK. OTHER GROUND FISH ALSO OF ESPECIAL CONCERN TO U.S. FISHERMEN.

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2. ALTHOUGH MEXICO IS NOT MEMBER OF ICNAF, FREEDOM OF

FISHING ON HIGH SEAS ENTAILS TAKING REASONABLE REGARD TO RIGHTS OF OTHERS, WHICH IN USG VIEW INCLUDES OBSERVING FISHERIES CONSERVATION REGULATORY PROGRAMS. IN ADDITION, 1958 CONVENTION ON FISHING AND CONSERVATION OF THE LIVING RESOURCES OF THE HIGH SEAS, TO WHICH MEXICO IS PARTY, LOOKS TO COOPERATION BY ALL NATIONS IN CONSERVATION PROGRAMS. CONSEQUENTLY, USCG AND CANADIAN ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES REGULARLY CALL ATTENTION OF NON-MEMBER F/Vs TO ICNAF REGULATIONS.

3. THIS WAS CASE LAST APRIL. TWO VENEZUELAN F/Vs AS WELL AS MEXICAN PATACHIN AND MATLAMAM WERE OBSERVED APRIL 9 IN CLOSED AREA BY JOINT CANADIAN-U.S. FISHERIES PATROL AND WITHDREW FROM AREA AFTER BEING ADVISED OF ICNAF REGULATION. VENEZUELAN F/Vs WERE CONTACTED BY CANADIAN PATROL VESSEL AND THEY IN TURN CONTACTED MEXICAN F/Vs. THIS IS ONLY KNOWN INSTANCE OF THESE F/Vs BEING IN AREA. FURTHERMORE, U.S. AND CANADIAN AUTHORITIES AND ICNAF EXECUTIVE SECRETARY KNOW OF NO FISHING BY MEXICAN VESSELS ANYWHERE IN ICNAF AREA AT ANY TIME OTHER THAN THIS SIGHTING. OF COURSE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT MEXICAN VESSELS MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN AT TIMES AS SPANISH PAIR TRAWLERS.

4. ALTHOUGH INDUSTRIAL DE PRODUCTOS ALIMENTICIOS OFFICIAL REFTTEL STATED NONE OF ICNAF AREA CATCH IS EXPORTED TO U.S., IT IS NOTED THAT U.S. LAW (P.L. 92-2L9 OF DECEMBER 23 1971, AMENDMENT TO FISHERMEN'S PROTECTIVE ACT) ALLOWS PROHIBITION OF IMPORTATION INTO U.S. OF FISH PRODUCTS FROM COUNTRY WHOSE NATIONALS, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, CONDUCT FISHING OPERATIONS IN A MANNER OR UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 243846

WHICH DIMINISH THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN INTERNATIONAL FISHERY CONSERVATION PROGRAM. SUCH PROHIBITION WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE RESTRICTED TO FISH INVOLVED IN SUCH FISHING OPERATIONS IF SUCH PROHIBITION WERE TO BE IMPOSED. THIS IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY, AS SUCH PROHIBITION HAS NOT YET BEEN CONSIDERED WITH REGARD TO ICNAF NON-MEMBERS NOT FOLLOWING ICNAF REGULATIONS.

5. SUGGEST THIS INFORMATION BE BROUGHT TO ATTENTION GOM
FISHERIES OFFICIALS AS WELL AS COMPANY OFFICIAL. ADDITION-
AL MATERIAL, SOME CLASSIFIED, BEING POUCHED TO FISHATT.

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